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251457Z Aug 00

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AGRE-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CEA-01	CIAE-00
	SMEC-00	COME-00	CTME-00	INL-00	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	DOT-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	EXIM-01	E-00
	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	FRB-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	ITC-01	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-00	TRSE-00
	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00
	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/013W				

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6938  
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 004750

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF, AF/S, AF/EPS, EB/IFD/ODF, EB/TPP/ODC  
TREASURY FOR ED BARBER, GRACE SONE, AND HOFFMAN BARAK  
USDOC FOR 2037/ERIC HENDERSON  
STATE PASS USTR/RWHITTAKER  
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/17/05  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [PINR](#) [PHUM](#) [ZI](#) [EAGR](#)  
SUBJECT: VP MSIKA: BLAMES OTHERS FOR VIOLENCE AND  
ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, BUT SOME ENCOURAGING WORDS ON LAND

REF: A) HARARE 4695 B) STATE 144224

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR MCDONALD. REASONS: 1.5 (B) AND  
(D).

SUMMARY

1. (C) AT THE DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTION, AMBASSADOR  
EXPRESSED STRONG U.S. CONCERNS ABOUT THE FARM OCCUPATIONS  
AND CONTINUING RURAL VIOLENCE TO VICE PRESIDENT MSIKA ON  
AUGUST 25. MSIKA BLAMED COMMERCIAL FARMERS AND THE  
OPPOSITION MDC FOR INCITING MUCH OF THE PRE-ELECTION  
VIOLENCE AND INSISTED THAT, IN OCCUPYING FARMS, MOST WAR  
VETERANS HAD MERELY ENGAGED IN TRESPASSING, WHICH WAS NOT  
A SERIOUS CRIME. THE CABINET HAD AGREED THAT NO NEW FARM  
OCCUPATIONS WOULD BE PERMITTED, AND THAT WAR VETERANS  
SHOULD BE MOVED TO FARMS IDENTIFIED FOR COMPULSORY  
ACQUISITION. HE ACKNOWLEDGED, HOWEVER, THAT PRESIDENT  
MUGABE WAS NOT IN AGREEMENT THAT VETERANS SHOULD BE  
REMOVED FROM CURRENTLY-OCCUPIED FARMS ON AN EXPEDITED  
BASIS. MSIKA SAID ZIMBABWE BORE ONLY SOME OF THE  
RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND SAID THE  
GOVERNMENT'S MILLENNIUM ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN OUGHT TO  
GET THE ECONOMY BACK ON TRACK. IN THE MEANTIME, THE GOZ  
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HAD DEVALUED THE CURRENCY AND WAS PLANNING TO REDUCE THE  
SIZE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE AND CUT GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES  
ACROSS THE BOARD TO IMPROVE ITS ECONOMIC CONDITION. END  
SUMMARY.

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U.S. CONCERNS  
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2. (C) AMBASSADOR, ACCOMPANIED BY USAID DIRECTOR AND  
POLOFF, CALLED ON VICE-PRESIDENT MSIKA AUGUST 25 TO  
DELIVER REF B DEMARCHE ON CONTINUING VIOLENCE AND THE  
GOVERNMENT'S LAND RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM, AS PRESIDENT  
MUGABE WAS UNAVAILABLE. AFTER PROVIDING MSIKA WITH A  
NON-PAPER CONTAINING REFTEL TALKING POINTS, THE  
AMBASSADOR UNDERScored CONTINUING U.S. CONCERN OVER  
VIOLENCE AND FARM OCCUPATIONS, WHICH HAD DAMAGED  
ZIMBABWE'S STANDING IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. HE  
DESCRIBED THE EVICTIONS OF WAR VETERANS FROM SEVERAL  
FARMS EARLIER IN THE WEEK (REF A) AS A POSITIVE  
DEVELOPMENT, BUT NOTED THAT VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION

WERE CONTINUING IN MANY AREAS. THE UNITED STATES  
RECOGNIZED THE NEED FOR LAND REFORM IN ZIMBABWE AND  
WANTED TO BE HELPFUL, BUT COULD NOT UNDER THESE  
CONDITIONS.

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PRE-ELECTION VIOLENCE  
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13. (C) THE PRE-ELECTION VIOLENCE, MSIKA CLAIMED, WAS NOT  
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MOSTLY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S MAKING. HE LAID MUCH OF THE  
BLAME ON COMMERCIAL FARMERS, WHOM HE SAID HAD RENEGED ON  
THEIR COMMITMENTS AT THE SEPTEMBER 1998 DONORS CONFERENCE  
ON LAND REFORM, AND SUBSEQUENTLY FORMED MILITIAS TO BLOCK  
THE GOVERNMENT'S RESETTLEMENT EFFORT. HE ALSO BLAMED THE  
OPPOSITION MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC), WHICH HE  
SAID WAS LAUNCHED NOT FROM ZIMBABWE BUT BY "OUTSIDE  
FORCES."

14. (C) THE VICE PRESIDENT INSISTED THAT THE FARM  
OCCUPATIONS PRIOR TO THE ELECTIONS HAD BEEN MOTIVATED NOT  
BY POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS BUT BY GENUINE ANGER AGAINST  
FARMERS AND THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE SLOW PACE OF  
RESETTLEMENT. (NB. IN PRIOR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE  
AMBASSADOR, MSIKA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT POLITICS HAD PLAYED A  
ROLE IN THE OCCUPATIONS. END NOTE) THE DONORS'  
SUSPENSION OF ASSISTANCE IN LIGHT OF THE OCCUPATIONS,  
MSIKA CLAIMED, EMBOLDENED THE FARMERS TO "ENGINEER"  
VIOLENT CONFRONTATIONS WITH THE WAR VETERANS, EVEN THOUGH  
THE VETERANS HAD BEEN TOLD TO BE PEACEFUL AND NOT TO  
INTERFERE WITH FARMING OPERATIONS. THE GOVERNMENT WOULD  
HAVE BEEN IRRESPONSIBLE IN ORDERING THE POLICE TO EVICT  
THE LARGE NUMBERS OF WAR VETERANS, AS THIS WOULD HAVE  
RESULTED IN WIDESPREAD BLOODSHED. IN ANY CASE, MSIKA  
SAID, MOST OF THE WAR VETERANS WERE MERELY TRESPASSING,  
WHICH IN HIS VIEW WAS NOT A SERIOUS CRIME.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 HARARE 004750

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ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, BUT SOME ENCOURAGING WORDS ON LAND

15. (C) MSIKA INSISTED THAT HE DOES NOT CONDONE  
LAWLESSNESS AND CRITICIZED THOSE WAR VETERANS WHO HAD  
INTERFERED WITH FARMING OPERATIONS OR BUILT STRUCTURES ON  
FARMS THEY HAD OCCUPIED. MSIKA SAID HE HAD ARGUED IN  
CABINET THAT THE VETERANS MUST BE MOVED AS SOON AS  
POSSIBLE TO FARMS IDENTIFIED FOR ACQUISITION, AS THE  
LONGER THIS PROCESS DRAGS ON, THE MORE DIFFICULT IT WILL  
BE TO MOVE THEM. HE ACKNOWLEDGED, HOWEVER, THAT  
PRESIDENT MUGABE DID NOT SHARE THE CABINET'S VIEW.

16. (C) THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE DISAGREED WITH MSIKA'S

CLAIM THAT THE COMMERCIAL FARMERS HAD ENGINEERED THE VIOLENCE. ON THE CONTRARY, THE EVIDENCE CONFIRMED THAT ZANU-PF BORE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE VAST MAJORITY OF PRE-ELECTION VIOLENCE. MSIKA DISAGREED, SAYING THAT ZANU-PF ONLY HAD RESPONDED TO PROVOCATIONS. TALK OF FARMER MILITIAS IS NONSENSE. BOTH HE AND MSIKA KNEW, THE AMBASSADOR SAID, THAT MANY OF THE SO-CALLED WAR VETERANS WERE TOO YOUNG TO HAVE FOUGHT IN THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE, AND CLEARLY HAD BEEN SENT TO THE FARMS TO INTIMIDATE AND BEAT THE FARMERS AND THEIR WORKERS. IF PRESIDENT MUGABE HAD MADE IT CLEAR FROM THE BEGINNING THAT VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION WERE UNACCEPTABLE AND POLICE HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO DO THEIR JOB, MOST OF THE LAWLESSNESS COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED.

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ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES  
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17. (C) MSIKA CLAIMED THAT ZIMBABWE DID NOT BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. THE GOZ PERHAPS WAS TO BLAME FOR SPENDING MORE THAN IT SHOULD HAVE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ON ITS MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN THE DROC, WHICH HE HOPED WOULD END SOON. HOWEVER, HE CRITICIZED THE UNITED KINGDOM FOR ADVOCATING THE IMPOSITION OF EU SANCTIONS AGAINST ZIMBABWE, AND FORMER AF ASSISTANT SECRETARY CHESTER CROCKER FOR DOING THE SAME THING IN THE UNITED STATES. THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT CROCKER WAS A PRIVATE CITIZEN REFLECTING HIS OWN VIEWS AND DID NOT SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE USG WAS NOT SEEKING TO PUNISH THE GOZ, BUT IS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS HERE. MSIKA ASKED ABOUT THE ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY ACT (ZDA), WHICH HE SAID WOULD PUSH ZIMBABWE IN THE WRONG DIRECTION. THE AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT THE EMBASSY SHARES THE CONCERNS OF THE U.S. CONGRESS ABOUT FARM OCCUPATIONS AND THE ACCOMPANYING VIOLENCE.

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WAY FORWARD  
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18. (C) ASKED ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S NEXT STEPS, THE VICE PRESIDENT REPLIED THAT THE GOZ'S MILLENNIUM ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN SHOULD GET THE ECONOMY BACK ON THE RIGHT

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TRACK. THE GOZ HAD DEVALUED THE CURRENCY (FROM 38 TO 50:1) AND WAS PLANNING TO REDUCE DRASTICALLY THE SIZE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE (NB: MSIKA'S AIDE TOLD POLOFF IN AN ASIDE THAT SOME 20,000 CIVIL SERVICE JOBS COULD BE ELIMINATED. END NOTE). IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT PLANNED TO REDUCE EXPENDITURES, BUT LIKELY WOULD NOT MEET ITS INITIAL TARGET OF A 6 BILLION (ZIMBABWE DOLLAR) REDUCTION. MSIKA NOTED THAT AN IMF TEAM HAD JUST ARRIVED IN HARARE, AND HE HOPED ITS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE CONSTRUCTIVE.

19. (C) ON LAND, THE GOZ'S ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE WAS TO ENSURE A DISTRIBUTION OF EIGHT MILLION HECTARES OF THE COUNTRY'S ARABLE LAND TO BLACK FARMERS, WITH WHITE FARMS RETAINING THE REMAINING FOUR MILLION. INDIGENOUS FARMERS CURRENTLY CONTROL THREE MILLION HECTARES. THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ABIDE BY ITS COMMITMENT TO ACQUIRE ONLY UNPRODUCTIVE FARMS OR THOSE OWNED BY ABSENTEE PROPRIETORS. FARMS ENGAGED IN AGRO-INDUSTRY WOULD BE EXEMPTED FROM THE RESETTLEMENT EFFORT. IN THE SHORT-TERM, NO NEW FARM OCCUPATIONS WOULD BE PERMITTED, WHILE WAR VETERANS CURRENTLY OCCUPYING COMMERCIAL FARMS WOULD BE REMOVED AND TAKEN TO LAND IDENTIFIED FOR COMPULSORY ACQUISITION. HE IMPLIED THAT THE HEAVY-HANDED TACTICS EMPLOYED BY POLICE DURING THE EVICTIONS OF SOME WAR VETERANS HAD COMPLICATED THE GOVERNMENT'S TASK. MSIKA SAID THOSE WHO WANT TO BE RESETTLED WOULD BE SCREENED

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 HARARE 004750

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SUBJECT: VP MSIKA: BLAMES OTHERS FOR VIOLENCE AND  
ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, BUT SOME ENCOURAGING WORDS ON LAND

CAREFULLY, AS SOME OF THEM ALREADY OWN FARMS.

110. (C) THE GOVERNMENT'S RESETTLEMENT EFFORT, MSIKA CONTINUED, WOULD BE "QUICKER AND SMOOTHER" WITH OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE, BUT WOULD BE "ROUGHER AND SLOWER" WITHOUT SUCH AID. THE DONORS ARE WILLING TO BE INVOLVED, THE AMBASSADOR REPLIED, BUT EMPHASIZED THAT THE VIOLENCE MUST END, RULE OF LAW MUST BE RESTORED, AND COURT ORDERS RELATED TO THE ILLEGAL INVASIONS MUST BE ENFORCED. ADDITIONALLY, THE PROCESS MUST BE FAIR AND TRANSPARENT, AND FARMOWNERS MUST BE COMPENSATED FOR THEIR LAND. ZIMBABWE'S LAND POLICY IS NOT A "NORMAL" ONE, MSIKA SAID, RECALLING THAT THE LIBERATION WAR HAD BEEN FOUGHT PRIMARILY OVER THE CONCENTRATION OF LAND IN THE HANDS OF A FEW.

111. (C) THE USAID DIRECTOR NOTED THAT DONORS HAVE DISCUSSED INFORMALLY HOW THEY MIGHT REENGAGE ON LAND REFORM, AND UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS. AMONG THE HURDLES TO REENGAGEMENT WAS THE GOZ'S CUMBERSOME INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK. WOULD THE GOZ BE WILLING TO SET UP A NEW, MORE STREAMLINED STRUCTURE TO WORK WITH THE DONORS ON LAND REFORM? THE VICE-PRESIDENT AGREED TO LOOK INTO THAT POSSIBILITY.

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COMMENT

112. (C) MSIKA'S COMMENTS LAYING THE PREDOMINANT BLAME ON OTHERS FOR ZIMBABWE'S ECONOMIC MESS AND THE PRE-ELECTION VIOLENCE WERE MERELY THE LATEST IN A COMMON REFRAIN FROM THIS GOVERNMENT. THESE ARE ALL FROM THE SAME SCRIPT. ON LAND, WE WERE ENCOURAGED BY MSIKA'S REPORT OF CABINET AGREEMENT THAT NO NEW INVASIONS WILL BE PERMITTED AND THAT WAR VETERANS SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM CURRENTLY-OCCUPIED FARMS, EXCEPT FROM THOSE WHICH HAVE BEEN LISTED. PRESIDENT MUGABE IS CLEARLY UNCOMFORTABLE WITH REMOVING THE VETERANS, HOWEVER, AND HIS DISCOMFORT LIKELY WAS NOT ASSUAGED BY THE AGGRESSIVE TACTICS EMPLOYED BY POLICE EARLIER THIS WEEK IN EVICTING SOME VETERANS FROM FARMS ON HARARE'S OUTSKIRTS. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR, INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER NKOSANA MOYO SURMISED THAT LOCAL POLICE OFFICERS, IN CAHOOTS WITH THE WAR VETERANS, MIGHT HAVE USED SUCH TACTICS INTENTIONALLY IN ORDER TO COMPLICATE THE GOZ'S ABILITY TO PROCEED WITH ADDITIONAL EVICTIONS. MEANWHILE, ACCORDING TO THE COMMERCIAL FARMERS UNION (CFU), THE EVICTIONS ARE CONTINUING. THE CFU WAS TOLD BY THE DEPUTY POLICE COMMISSIONER ON AUGUST 25 THAT THE POLICE WOULD CONTINUE TO REMOVE VETERANS FROM OCCUPIED FARMS UNLESS ORDERED OTHERWISE.

113. (C) MSIKA'S COMMENTS ON THE ECONOMIC WAY FORWARD FRANKLY DID NOT INSPIRE MUCH CONFIDENCE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE ABLE TO EXTRICATE ITSELF FROM THE

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CURRENT MESS. THE MILLENNIUM ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN IS A LAUNDRY LIST OF LAUDABLE GOALS, BUT THE GOVERNMENT AT PRESENT DOES NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES -- OR POLITICAL WILL -- TO IMPLEMENT MOST OF ITS PROVISIONS. THE GOVERNMENT HAS, FOR INSTANCE, PROMISED FOR THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS TO SIGNIFICANTLY CUT THE PUBLIC SECTOR PAYROLL, BUT WE HAVE

YET TO SEE ANY CONCRETE STEPS IN THAT DIRECTION.

MCDONALD

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